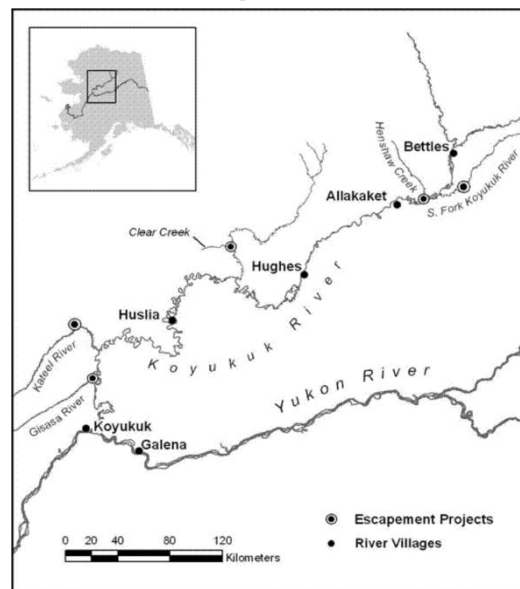


Henshaw Creek Weir Project TCC Wildlife & Parks Department

The Tanana Chiefs Conference utilizes a resistance board weir in the Henshaw Creek, a tributary to the Koyukuk River, to collect abundance and run timing information on migrating Chinook and chum salmon. The weir allows biologists to determine salmon escapement, run timing, and demographic composition of the migrating populations.

The Henshaw Creek weir originates in the Alatna Hills and flows southeasterly for 144 kilometers before entering the Koyukuk River above the villages of Alatna and Allakaket. The weir has been in operation since 2000, and has been operated by TCC since 2007. The focus of the project is to enumerate spawning Chinook and chum salmon.



Location of the Henshaw Creek Weir project.

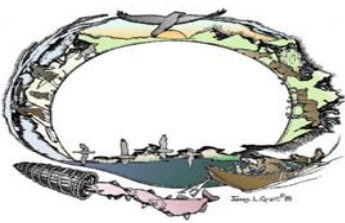


A resistance board weir on the Henshaw Creek is an important tool to determine salmon run timing and abundance of spawning fish.

Resistance board weirs consist of interlinked floating panels that form a fence stretching across the whole river. The panels are anchored to the river bottom on the upstream side. This allows water to flow through, but stops the upstream passage of fish of a particular size. The center of the weir has a chute with a gated holding pen similar to a fish trap which allows for enumeration and sampling.

Chinook salmon and summer chum salmon are the primary species counted at the Henshaw Creek Weir.





Henshaw Creek Weir Project

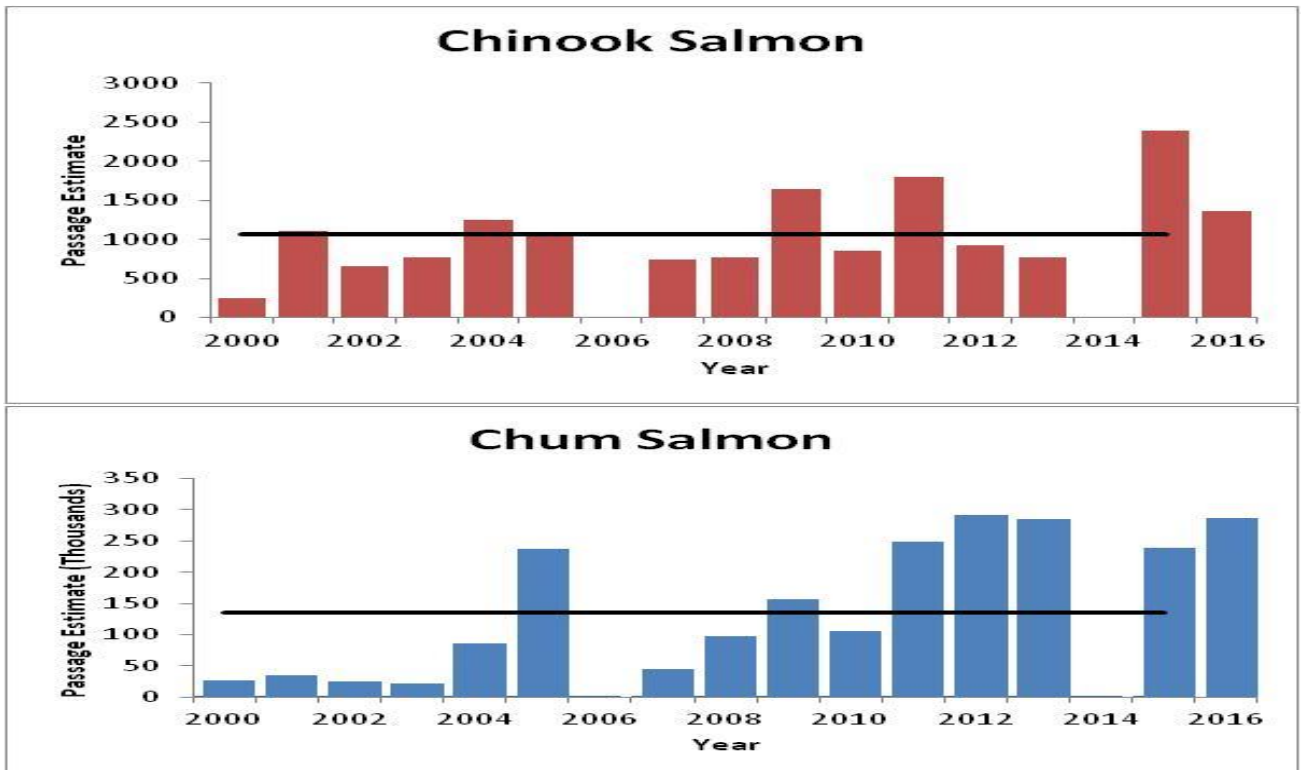
TCC Wildlife & Parks Department



As fish swim through the pen, biologists count the fish, identify the species, then release the fish so they may continue swimming upstream to spawn. A subset of the total Chinook salmon and chum salmon passing through the weir are sampled to record the sex and length of the salmon, and a scale is pulled to later determine the fish's age. This information is used to help managers make in-season management decisions, determine population structure, and to help predict run strength in future years.

The weir runs from early June until early August. Fisheries interns and technicians enumerate salmon 24 hours per day and collect biological information from approximately 160 salmon per week per species.

Counts from the weir project are reported daily to the USFWS Subsistence Fisheries Branch in Fairbanks, and are made available for fish managers. In addition to salmon, information on other fish species important for subsistence use is collected to understand how these populations are doing, to evaluate their recent management actions, help guide future management decisions, and to increase the overall understanding of their ecology.



Projects like this allow managers and researchers to better understand the species that we rely upon, and will help in the development of sound decision making in the future. We encourage you to ask questions and get involved in protecting these and other natural resources for the future!